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BRIEF MEMOIR
OF THE
REV. H. NORTH.

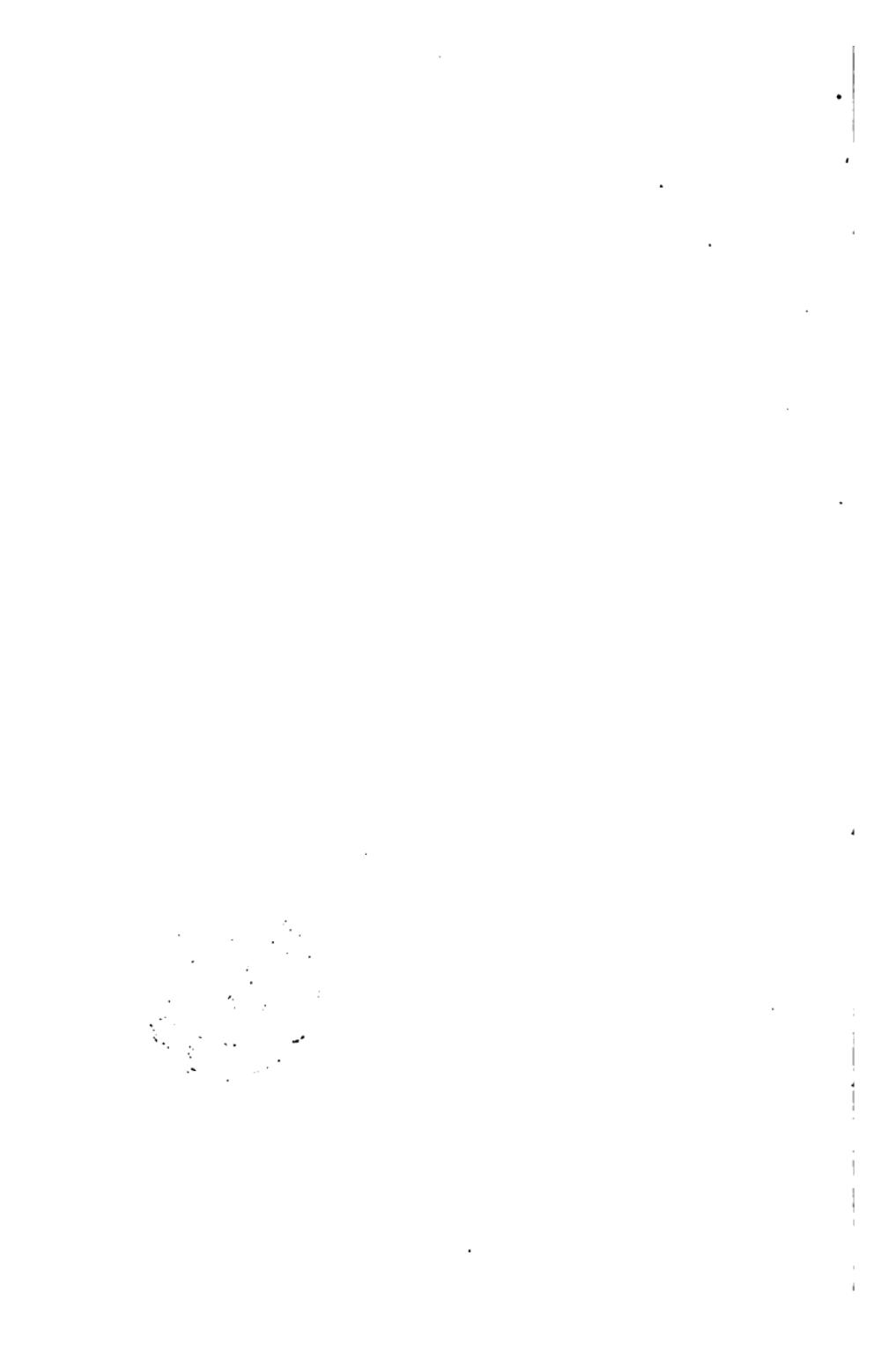
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A BRIEF MEMOIR.



A

BRIEF MEMOIR

OF

THE REV. HENRY NORTH,

LATE ASSISTANT MINISTER OF WELBECK CHAPEL.

BY

I. W. NORTH, M. A.

CURATE OF FULHAM.



LONDON :

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M E M O I R, &c.

IN presenting to public notice the following Memoir, it is my wish to preserve the remembrance of one who possessed a mind of no common power, improved and refined by more than ordinary culture; above all, exalted and ennobled by a clear and comprehensive acquaintance with divine truth.

It seems to me the more necessary to circulate a short account of my father's illness and death, because he enjoyed an extensive acquaintance, though it was the privilege of few to know him intimately. That reserve of character, or rather that constitutional timidity to which he alluded more than once during his last illness, in a manner the most

affecting, kept his habits of thought and the depth of his piety concealed even from the members of his own family, who were but little conscious of the secret workings of his soul. The purity of his mind, manifested by his habits and conversation, and the consistency of his whole life, were indeed well known to us all. Nor could we doubt that his fellowship was with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. Often, when surrounded by his family, and apparently enjoying with them the recreation of music or of conversation, he was seen to be engaged in the contemplation of divine and heavenly things, and his eye lifted towards heaven showed plainly where his mind and heart were. It was not, however, until he was confined by illness to his sick chamber, that we became fully sensible of the spiritual tone and temper of his mind, and of the beautiful simplicity of his religious opinions.

It would indeed be wrong to suppose that the views of divine truth which are so strikingly exhibited in the conversation of his last moments were but recently adopted.

My father was from an early period in life taught to understand, and know, and highly value, the truths of the Gospel. For some time he felt very strong convictions of sin, and sought for relief to his oppressed and wounded spirit, in the public ministry of many excellent clergymen. He was directed at length to the Rev. H. Forster and the Rev. R. Cecil, and it was through the divine blessing on their teaching that he found that peace and comfort of which he was in search. From this time until the close of his life, he advanced steadily in his christian course. From a prudent fear of encouraging a disposition to say more than the genuine feelings of the heart prompt, he was never forward to enter into a discussion of those spiritual truths which were the constant subject of his thoughts, and the source of his purest joy. He dissuaded his children, and all over whom he possessed influence, from making strong and vehement assertions of their love and devotion to the Saviour, or of the joy which they experienced in religion, ever teaching them to prove the sincerity of their

professions, and the reality of their faith, by good and christian tempers, and by a well-regulated conversation. He acted upon the maxim, " Speak nobly of religion, but let it be well timed;" and many are the pleasing proofs that his silent example produced a powerful effect on those to whom he seldom spoke.

Let it not be inferred from this that my dear father thought it right to maintain silence on the important truths of religion, unless circumstances obliged him to declare his opinions. He was indeed aware that a proper fear of giving countenance to superficial views of truth, by entering too lightly into the discussion of it, might degenerate into unwarranted reserve, and an unbecoming silence on this the most important of all subjects. Such, he was deeply conscious, had been the tendency of his own natural timidity, and he mourned his backwardness to enter into conversation upon these interesting topics. He more than once acknowledged it to be a sin, on account of which he wished to be humbled before God.

Eminently useful as his life was, and great as were the effects produced by his purity, and goodness, and truth, there can be no doubt that his influence would have been far greater, and his ministerial course marked by the conversion and the progressive holiness of more among his friends and neighbours, if he had been more ready to communicate to others the things which were freely given to him of God. During the latter months of his life, he overcame his reluctance to impart to those around him the secret movements of his mind, the thoughts which had before been confined to himself and his God ; and great was our concern and surprise, to find how little comparatively we knew of his excellencies, how little we had explored the mine of wisdom and of truth which had been so long in our possession. Our attention was at length arrested, and we were forcibly impressed by the deep solemnity of his manner and the wisdom of his ordinary conversation. He appeared to speak as one who had but a short time longer to pass with us ; and it is

the remark of one who observed him closely, that, for some time before disease had made any perceptible inroads on his constitution, his mind seemed preparing for the solemn event which was so rapidly approaching. Often on returning from his morning walk he has appeared at a loss for words to convey an adequate idea of the intimate communion with God which it had been his privilege to enjoy. "When you have made certain progress in the divine life," he would say, "these blessed truths almost cease to be matters of faith; they become almost tangible; it seems as if you could grasp them." On subjects such as these, he then delighted to dwell. It was ever a peculiar feature in my father's character, that he shrank from conversation on common and ordinary topics. He took no interest in the trifles which so often form, as it were, the staple commodity of social intercourse, and, by marked and continued silence, he reproved those who were forward to talk on light and frivolous subjects.

But when, overcoming his natural reserve,

he was induced to give his opinion upon the truths of religion, his sentiments were marked by dignity and power, by his profound acquaintance with the workings of the human heart, by his sound judgment, and his deep penetration.

This was yet more strikingly the case, when, on the increase of his disorder, he was unable to leave his bedroom. It seemed then that the view of death, as an event probably not distant, and the prospect of eternity which he was enabled to survey with the calm assurance of faith, inspired in him the wish to benefit and instruct all who were permitted to enter his sick chamber. That fear which had so often kept him silent was then removed, and the holy tenor of his conversation caused the pain of separation from him to be more deeply felt.

I should not venture to speak thus of my departed parent, if I did not feel persuaded that the original remarks which are subjoined to this short Memoir, would establish the truth of these observations. These remarks are compiled from the recol-

lections of those whose happiness it was to attend upon him during his protracted illness. We have only to lament that so little has been preserved. Cherishing for some time the hope of his recovery, we did not, at the first, note down expressions which we have since in vain endeavoured to call to remembrance. Those only which were forcibly impressed on our memory are here recorded; and even in these there is sometimes a variation from his own words, which were always peculiarly happy and appropriate. But nothing has been put into his mouth; not a single observation has been intentionally altered; nor has one been added from a vague idea that my father said something like it. The only alteration I have made is in the suppression of names, and in the adaptation of his remarks, as far as possible, for the perusal of those who are not known to his family. This may not, in the judgment of some, have been wisely attempted or successfully executed; but the difficulty of the task will, I think, be generally conceded. The apology which I offer for

introducing the names of any members of our family, is my desire to preserve the observations made by him in their original force and pertinence. I could have wished to suppress the mention of any living person, but by so doing I should have failed in my endeavour to give a just portraiture of my father during his last sickness.

It is not my intention to obtrude upon the notice of others the details of a life eminent only for its uniform consistency, and for the singular disregard of any narrow or selfish objects. Of his religious opinions a correct estimate may be formed from the perusal of the few observations which follow this *Mémoir*. I must, however, say that my father was strongly attached to the doctrines and the formularies of the church of which he was a minister, admiring the judgment with which her articles are framed, and the just and beautiful propriety with which they enforce every truth of our holy religion. I remember to have heard him often say that the services of our church are so scriptural and so excellent, that he was tempted to think the compilers

and the authors of our Liturgy were, in an eminent degree, guided and taught by the Holy Spirit. He watched with a jealous eye every change made either in the administration of her services, or in the doctrines which were enforced from her pulpits. Being himself endowed, not with the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, he was fearful of innovations either in discipline or in practice, often quoting the words of the prophet Jeremiah,*—“ Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”

The scope of his preaching he ever wished to be repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. These truths, with the necessity of prayer for the illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit, he was ever anxious to enforce. A question which he continually asked, when the talents or the preaching of a minister of Christ were the topic of conversation, was, “ Does he lay

* Ch. vi. 16.

stress upon the indispensable necessity of a renewal of the heart by the Divine Spirit?" Every other point seemed to him of minor importance; accustomed as he was to regard advancement in holiness and growth in grace as the only sure criterion of the reality and the power of faith.

I shall conclude these prefatory observations by a few extracts from some of the many letters received by our family on the intelligence of his death. They will show that in some instances his advice and counsel were productive of the happiest consequences, and that his example exercised a beneficial influence over some whom his voice seldom if ever reached.

"I thank you," says one, who had known my father almost from her infancy, "from the very bottom of my heart, for the particulars you have given me of this mournful event; they were a great consolation to me. I cannot tell you how it affected and pleased me to hear that your dear father remembered me in his prayers."

Another friend, in speaking of the manu-

script copy of the remarks now published, says, "It is a most blessed account of a much honoured servant of his divine Lord, and is singularly instructive, humbling, yet consoling and joy-inspiring. I most sincerely again thank you for the profit and holy pleasure of reading the beautiful and admirable remarks of your lamented parent."

Another friend says, "The image of your much esteemed and highly valued parent is associated in my mind with much that is profitable and pleasing in by-gone days. When but a thoughtless girl, I always listened to him with delight, and drew many an instructive lesson from his conversation, and though latterly my interviews with him have been very rare, yet my love for him never diminished, and the sight of his dear, placid, holy countenance, and the tones of his voice, used to impart to me the truest pleasure."

"Three short months since," writes another, "when I last saw him, and received his parting blessing, I little thought I never again in this world should look on that countenance always beaming with happiness,

or hear that voice never raised but in accents of peace and love. What do I not owe to his affectionate admonitions? for he it was who first taught me to look for happiness where alone it is to be found; pointed to me the paths of peace and holiness, himself leading the way. While life lasts, dearly will memory cherish the affectionate reproofs, the kind encouragement, the valued counsel, of the dearest of friends."

Another friend says, "Though not in the habit of seeing Mr. North often, yet I always felt I possessed in him a friend and adviser to whom I might turn, and from whom I could receive pure and excellent counsel. Every day, and I might almost say every hour, his words and manner seem to rise before me, and renew my regret for such a loss."

One who knew my father intimately, speaking of him, says, "If ever man enjoyed true faith, it was my old friend, whose memory I shall regard and cherish."

To these, and the many other friends who were acquainted with my father, I am sure the perusal of this short account of one so justly

esteemed will give pleasure. May it please God to inspire them, and all into whose hands this little book may fall, with that firm, and simple, and humble reliance upon the Saviour, which supported him through a long and wearisome illness, which dispelled the gloom of the grave, and enabled him to see "Him who is invisible." May we all be enabled to follow his example, considering the end of his conversation, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever !

“On the 18th of January, 1838, the day on which my father completed his sixty-eighth year, and when he was still in the enjoyment of health, I was alone in the breakfast parlour,” says a member of the family, “when he entered; and on my wishing him many happy returns of the day, he replied, with much cheerfulness, ‘A strange salutation to an old man, dear.’ On my replying that I did hope we might be permitted still to look forward to its recurrence for some years, he said, in terms which I do not distinctly recollect, that he had been spared to see almost every wish of his heart gratified; and entering into particulars respecting the different members of his family, he spoke with much gratitude of the comfort which he enjoyed in them, and seemed to say that there was now nothing which would make him wish to prolong his stay here.”

Shortly after, speaking on the subject of

faith, he asked, " How are we to understand the expressions, ' Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen ? ' and then proceeded to give his own impression of their meaning. He said that it appeared to him that the imagination painted in lively colours, as upon a canvass, those glorious realities which faith enables us to believe ; and then quoting the lines of Shakspeare,

" The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name— " *

he enlarged upon them, observing that this was the chief end for which the noble faculty of the imagination was granted ; not to be employed about inferior objects, but to enable us to apprehend, and in a manner to realise, the objects revealed to us in the Word of God.

On Wednesday, the 31st, when I came to his bedside, in answer to my observation,

* *Midsummer Night Dream.*

“ I expected to find you in peace,” my father said, slowly and distinctly—“ O yes ! O yes, dearest ! By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my soul. I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him. I felt so low and feeble last night, that I almost doubted whether I should again rally my strength, but, blessed be God, I experienced no alarm. I am going, as a plain Christian once said, ‘ to find mercy.’ I do not expect any high degree of glory ; but, through my Saviour, who hath bought me with his blood, I expect to meet my Judge in peace. I do not fear lest I should see a frown upon his countenance ; I hope rather to see the smile of approbation. The rigorous demands of the holy law of God do not terrify me, for I shall answer them all by pointing to the cross of Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Do not grieve ; we shall soon meet again, I trust, in the kingdom of God.”

“ Do not dwell on this,” I said, “ for I trust we shall be spared to spend some more

time together here." "It may be so," he replied; "I do not wish to precipitate my departure, though to depart and be with Christ is far better. I hope soon to enter that kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness; where I shall see my God and Father who made and formed me, my Saviour who redeemed me with his blood, and that Holy Ghost who is my sanctifier and my comforter; where I hope to join the general assembly and church of the first-born. Many things concur to bind me to this life; but I am quite resigned."

When I assured him of the comfort which I felt in seeing him so calm and cheerful, he said, "O yes! O yes! there is no gloom, no fear; God has purchased me with the precious blood of his dear Son." Then adverting to a subject on which he had often before remarked, and which, as we have since learned, had long been mentioned in his daily prayers, he begged me to guard against fallacies and delusions, and to keep ever in view the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus.

The arrival of my younger brother from Yarmouth, on the 31st of January, gave him great pleasure. In answer to his inquiries about the state of his health, my father said, “ The disorder does not take its flight very promptly.” He added, with much cheerfulness, “ The worst part of it is, that the doctors have closed my lips so completely ; that, they say, is the greatest danger ; but I do not in that respect intend to be implicitly obedient.” My brother said, “ I was sure that I should find you in a happy state of mind.” “ Yes,” he replied, “ I am sure I ought to be ; and if there is any cause to the contrary, it exists unknown to me. Mercy, goodness, and love, have followed me all my days. I have found God a faithful God, faithful to all his engagements, superabounding above his engagements. He has blessed me in myself, in my family, in my circumstances, in everything. Not one good thing which our God has promised has he failed in towards me ; nor will he fail towards any one of you who walk with him steadily and humbly, not hastily. Go on steadily till

your lives end. Christianity is a mine of heavenly treasures, never exhausted in this world; the more we dig into it, the more we shall discover its effulgence, its beauties, and its glories, the more we shall discover of the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus. Only beware of them that are given to change; listen to no fancies, no novelties; confine yourself as much as possible to that reading which leads to everlasting life.”*

On the 2nd of February, I was again standing by his bedside, and when I adverted to some pleasing circumstances in my parish,

* These remarks were called forth by the fear which he felt lest those most dear to him should be entangled in all or any of those errors which have of late divided the church. All who knew my father will remember with what anxiety and sorrow he observed the progress of those opinions which threaten the very foundations of our faith under the specious guise of high churchmanship; and none who were present in his sick chamber can fail to recollect with what energetic movements of the body he accompanied this caution to his children, whom he repeatedly charged to be on their guard against the influence of those who would encumber the spirit of Christianity with the erroneous doctrines contained in the Oxford Tracts.

he said, "Bless the Lord, blessed God, tender Father, bless the Lord,* that he should have disposed our hearts to speak on these blessed truths." Early on the following day, he again addressed me nearly as follows:—"I desire to bow my knees before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to lament before him my great deficiencies as a minister of Christ. No one can be more sensible than I am that I have often shrunk back when I ought to have gone forward, and have been silent where I should have spoken boldly. I have often shrunk from duty, and I have been deeply humbled for it, God knows: it is a deep constitutional infirmity, which I must bear. From my infancy, I was abashed even before a child. And I have ever blessed God, who has given me children who possess a parent's desire without labouring under a parent's infirmity. You know not the joy it has afforded me. This is your right sphere; take care to keep yourself free and unfettered to labour for Christ. Enter into no engage-

* This he repeated many times.

ments which might call your attention off from his blessed, blessed service. It has been a source of great comfort to me to see my children actively engaged in the service of God." On my saying that it was impossible to know how far his silent example and uniform consistency had proved a blessing to his friends and acquaintances, he said, "To God be all the glory, if any good has been done." And in answer to my observation, that no children could owe a deeper debt of gratitude to a parent than we did to him, he answered, with that partiality which a christian parent is likely to feel, "Blessed be God, you have made the only return which I have ever coveted at his blessed hands, to see you walking in the good ways of God. You know the passage: 'Instead of thy fathers, thou shalt have children,' that I have in its fullest extent." I said, "I trust it may please God to spare you to see us making better returns for your care and kindness than we have yet made. If this were our last conversation, I should have to ask for-

giveness for many little acts which have given you pain." "O!" he replied, "they have been nothing more than what we call the effervescence of youth. We all have our short-comings: there is not a man that liveth and sinneth not. Mine have been too serious. I know that I have often shrunk when I ought to have been bold, but this is my constitution, and ever was from an infant. Constitutional infirmity and natural duties, and my desire to promote the welfare of my children, have concurred to hinder my active discharge of ministerial duties. But I know where to look as the true ground of my acceptance with God. I know in whom I have believed. I know that, were my holiness ten times and that ten times told greater than it is, still I should need to be cleansed in the blood of Christ. Nay, did I approximate to the perfection of an angel, even within that distance, mark it well," he said, with much emphasis, pointing to the tip of his finger, "within that distance of the holiness of God, had I not the spotless purity of my God, I could not stand for a

moment in his presence. O what a blessing to be able to say, I will trust and not be afraid, behold God is my salvation ! God," he repeated with the strongest emphasis, putting forth his hand, " is my salvation. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." On my observing, " It is most comforting to hear from you so clear a statement of your feelings on this important subject, which we should strive to keep prominently in view;" " Most important," he replied ; " one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled : and it is nowhere fulfilled but in Christ."

Feb. 5. Upon my sister telling him of the zealous manner in which a young clergyman, the son of a dissenting minister, was fulfilling his pastoral duties, he said, " Blessed be God ! hail the glorious reign of Messiah, Prince of peace ! Oh the glorious day when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ ! How did David estimate this joyful anticipation ? ' Let the people praise thee, O God, yea, let all the people praise

thee ! O let the nations rejoice and be glad, for thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.' Let us pray earnestly for the accomplishment of these glorious promises ; let us pray individually. You know in a building there is the skilful architect who raises the magnificent cupola, but there is, too, the common bricklayer who forms and fashions each brick ; but both have a share in raising the splendid cathedral. So the humblest Christian may unite in prayer to God for the fulfilment of his gracious promises. He may be assured with David that to be one of the meanest of the people of God is far better than to be held in high estimation, and to have great possessions in this world. David says, and O how truly ! ' I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.' Better to be hewers of wood and drawers of water in the temple of God, than to hold an elevated place among the people of the world. The world," he said, " will tell you of happiness, and speak of peace ; but when, like me, you

have proved the fallacious nature of all this world can offer, you will learn to prize more highly those glorious views which the gospel opens to you, those glorious prospects beyond the grave of which I dare not, indeed I cannot, adequately speak : but which have been vividly impressed upon my own mind, nay, which I humbly hope, through mercy, I may say are within the reach of my own attainment."

Addressing my two younger sisters, he said, " Press on, my children, quietly and steadily in your christian course ; do not be impetuous, expecting to advance very rapidly. Imitate the man who has, we will say, to perform a journey from here to the West Indies. He does not expect to fly over the deep in twenty-four hours, but he rises every morning, sets his sails, attends to favouring gales and veering tides, until at length, after weeks or months, he reaches his destination : so do you day by day rise and watch closely God's providential dealings : do not attempt to act counter to them, but endeavour to improve them. Go on quietly :

let your religion be seated deeply within your own hearts. The kingdom of God is within you. You remember how it is said of that blessed character, of whom we should always speak with veneration, (though she has been thrown to a distance from us by popish superstition,) when she saw high and mysterious transactions passing before her, which she could not perfectly comprehend, that 'Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.' Follow her example. Be not indiscreet in communicating to others. Talk much with God, and very little with others. Have a secret council chamber in your own bosoms, at which let there be ever present a merciful God, your blessed Redeemer and Saviour, the Holy Spirit of God, your own immortal spirit, and the blessed word of God. Let that be your little council chamber: there assemble frequently to study the word of everlasting life, and bring all your thoughts and actions to that unerring standard. 'Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?'"

Speaking on his favourite subject, the power of faith, with the aid of the natural faculty of the imagination vividly to realise the truths of revelation, he said, “ You know that in the case of Colonel Gardiner, when these glorious objects were presented to his mind by the Spirit of God, so vivid was the impression made upon him, that he resembled St. Paul, when caught up into the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell. Adverting in his own beautiful language to a passage, on which in health he often dwelt with delight, where an illustrious Roman took comfort under a severe domestic affliction from the affecting contemplation of flourishing cities, Athens, Corinth, and others, then in ruins, he remarked how close an affinity his feelings bore to the ground of consolation suggested to Baruch when mourning over his own private calamities amidst the desolation of Jerusalem, and observed, that in their search after truth these poor heathen sometimes touched the very borders of revelation. ‘ It was the point,’ he said, ‘ where their

Egypt touched the confines of our Goshen."

To a member of the family who went to his bedside early one morning, he said, "When the heart is rightly attuned, it is astonishing what trifling circumstances will lead us to the contemplation of the works of our God in creation, and thus recreate and delight the mind. When they open my window in the morning, I see a little mark upon the glass which reminds me of the sea-gull, with its flapping wings, and its head almost like a point between them, and in an instant I am transported to the sea-shore, and picture to myself its heaving billows and wide expanse; and thus my mind is recreated and refreshed. O the sweetness and blessedness of communion with God ! Little do the world know what it is. Great shall be the peace of thy children. 'An highway shall be there, and a way.' O walk steadily and humbly in that blessed way ! There is but one way. 'I am the way.' Walk in Him."

To another member of his family he said,

“ When I was a young man, I spent all my money in buying music to gratify my taste. I played on two instruments ; and my music was my pride. When it first pleased my heavenly Father to call me to a knowledge of himself, and to grant me serious impressions, I made the resolution to lay aside my music, and to devote those resources, which had hitherto been used for my own gratification, to the service of God, in buying and circulating religious books. Well, I was enabled to make this little sacrifice, and a gracious God was pleased to accept even so poor an offering at my hands ; and I always trace the closest affinity between that circumstance and the talent with which he has been pleased in his mercy to endow one of my own family. You see, my dear child, that even in this life we shall never be losers by making any sacrifice that can be acceptable in the sight of God.”

He had been suffering from a slight rheumatic pain in the shoulder, and on one of us expressing a hope that the pain was alleviated, he replied, “ Yes, blessed be God,

he meets every inconvenience with an appropriate mercy." Shortly after, he said, "If my heavenly Father had allowed me to choose the manner in which I should depart out of life, this is just what I should have selected; it is life gently ebbing away. A beautiful image," he added, "presents itself to my mind. Methinks I see a crystal stream gliding along through time, till it loses itself in eternity." To a friend who had expressed an earnest desire to see him, he spoke in a very solemn manner, stating the grounds of his own hope of acceptance with God. "I am now," he said, "on the brink of eternity, and of what avail would the empire of the universe be to me, if I could not look to my Saviour as 'made of God unto me wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption ?'"

March the 3rd he was very ill, and we all thought that his end was approaching. A young friend, to whom he was much attached, coming to his bedside, he gave her his hand, and said, "I am very sorry, dear; but a shake of the hands is almost the only con-

versation I can have with thee. God be gracious to thee, and bless thee, and keep thee in his holy and righteous ways ! Live to his glory, and then thou'l die in peace.” When his two little grandchildren were placed upon his bed, he said, “ You little consider, my dear children, how ill suited such a scene as this is to one depressed in spirits, and enfeebled by long disease, though I would wish to say what might be suitable to the occasion to the dear children, and to give them my blessing ; and may God Almighty bless them ! All my prayers for them have long been summed up in this, God be gracious to them, and bless them ! May they be as pleasant plants around the table of their parents, and, from being tender plants, may they grow up trees of righteousness, of the Lord’s right-hand planting, that he may be glorified. God bless you, my dear children; and be gracious to you !”

An intimate friend of our family coming to his bedside in the evening, my father asked him how he was ; and on his replying,

“ Very well,” he said, with much cheerfulness, “ So am I too, I hope.” “ Yes, sir,” replied —, “ there are many that might envy you.” And when the name of one who almost wished to change places with him was mentioned, he expressed surprise, and said, “ You see how the want of the love of God can cloud over with the gloom of the shadow of death the brightest moments of earthly prospects.” Then addressing a young friend, in whom he took a lively interest, and who was just entering upon life, he said, “ I often think of the complicated circumstances in which you will be placed, as a mighty labyrinth, which your heavenly Father alone can thread. Only walk humbly with God. As the eyes of a maid are to her mistress, and of a servant to his master, so in all your ways acknowledge God. Live in unity,” he added, speaking to those who were standing by his bedside, “ live in unity and gedly love. I have always triumphed in the unity that has subsisted in my family ; now preserve it among yourselves. Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

On Sunday, March the 4th, he said to two of his children who were watching by his side, "If it were not language unbecoming a sinful creature, I should be disposed to say, why are his chariot-wheels so long coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot? But I will not say so, though it now becomes a consummation greatly to be desired. I would rather say, 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.' I will not express myself more strongly, as I should be sorry the aptitude of a quotation should lead me to deviate from the strict line of beautiful, immutable truth.

"I had hoped, if I had been spared, to have devoted my leisure to a fuller consideration of some of those deep truths, which are usually touched on too lightly. I had thought of writing a course of lectures on such passages, for instance, as 'Joy unspeakable and full of glory.' We are apt to pass these words by as common expressions; but they are not common expressions; there is a depth of meaning in

them which we can very little enter into. Dig deep," he said, with much emphasis, "into the gospel mine ; let me beg of you, in dwelling upon these truths, not to cut them short in their heavenly dimensions, nor to curtail them of their full proportions."

On the 6th, he said, with much cheerfulness, " When you told me it was a fine morning, I felt for the first time a slight inkling—(it is a simple term, but expresses just what I mean)—a slight inkling to see one more summer's morning in this world : but it was only like a thin vapour passing over an unclouded sky." After a pause, he added, " Beware of violent expressions of feeling in religion ; they are not natural. Do not use such expressions as ' O for that unclouded scene where all is sunshine ! ' Let all be in accordance with the dictates of the Spirit of God. Let your immortal spirit, in its intercourse with its immortal Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, be like a bride dressing herself for her husband."

In the night of March 7th, when sadly

harassed by an unceasing cough, he said, "What can I do?" and clasping his hands, he added, "Lord Jesus, into thy hands I commend my spirit." To my brother he said, "I am quite bewildered, I know not which way to look;" and on his replying, "You can look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith"—"Yes," he said, "I do look to him, not only with my eye, but with my whole heart."

"Be assured," he said on March 10th, "even in these my last moments, it is not all lost time, lifeless as I appear to be as I lie here. I am still endeavouring to improve the time in working out my own salvation, that is to say, seeking that every grace may be perfected in me, that I may become more meet for my great change. Oh! my dearest, dearest —, though I do sometimes feel a longing to depart, I trust it is not the longing of impatience, though it is very tiresome to lie here. I am looking forward to the moment when all this heap of rubbish, with a fearful hurly-burly of confusion and disorder, shall mingle with its kindred dust,

and be deposited in the grave, the only fit receptacle for such a mass of vileness ; and I doubt not my God will be with me at the solemn moment. I sometimes wish," he shortly after said, "that I might be permitted, after my departure, to return and tell you some of the sweet tales of the Spirit which I have learnt in this my visitation. But this cannot be ; you must take the same course to learn them, that I have taken."

On Sunday, March 11th, he called us all around his bed, and said, "A subject of such importance has occupied my thoughts, that I wish to talk to you about it, though my mind is so shattered, that I do not know whether I express myself correctly. I am now approaching the solemn moment of my departure, and, blessed be God, I enjoy peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. But I fear lest there should be too much of a spirit of self-complacency, without a due regard to the justice and wrath of God, on account of my sins. It seems to me a point of vast and vital importance. This creeping error is insinuating itself into the

church, through the prevalence of that mawkish German literature, casting a sickly hue over all the truths of the Gospel, and robbing God of the glory of all his works. It is that spirit of self-complacency which leads men to rest in the kindness and mercy of God, without a due regard to his wrath and justice. From this source will arise that flood of poison, which will deluge all Europe.

Early in the morning of the 13th, one of the family was asked to perform a little office of kindness for him ; when his request was complied with, he said, “ Remove one more thorn, one more pebble from the path of the pilgrim who has nearly arrived at the close of his journey. Do not mistake me, my —, I am not in a hurry ; he that believeth shall not make haste. I am washing my soul in the blood of Christ, but I feel at times such a sense of suffocation, that I think I shall not long survive. God bless you, God bless us all !” On the following day, I think, he broke out in the most affecting manner — “ Oh ce beau moment du

dernier soupir ! Pardonnez, pardonnez-moi, O mon Dieu ! Tu sais comme c'est difficile de sentir toute la force et la vigueur de la vie, et d'endurer tant de souffrances. Pardonnez, pardonnez-moi, mon Dieu, que ta volonté, pas la mienne, soit faite ; je verrai ton visage et celui de mon Sauveur dans toute sa beauté."

In the afternoon of the 1st of April, he said, with much cheerfulness, to a young friend who had seen him a month previously, " You see, dear, here you left me, and here you find me. We are told, you know, that patience must have its perfect work ; we must not cut it short, and I have been taught the lesson pretty effectually ; for they tell me I have been nine weeks lying here. But I can trace this sickness to many beautiful and lovely causes, some of which, I assure you, bring a blush into my cheek. It has been attended by many marked mercies. I'm glad to see thee, dear. Be sober, be steady in your religion, not ascetic, not gloomy. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Aim at more

internal holiness. You must follow on to know the Lord. It is only by bringing the soul daily to be modelled by the Spirit of God, by walking humbly and closely with Him, that you can make real progress in religion."

He lingered until Monday morning, April 16th. Long after he had ceased to speak, as long as he had the power of moving his hands, they were frequently clasped, as if in the attitude of prayer, while by their gentle pressure when we placed ours within them, he showed that he still knew we were about him. About noon on that day, without a struggle or a sigh, his spirit took its joyful flight to the presence of his Saviour and his God.

THE END.

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